

(c) the steps taken by the Government to contain the prices of books;

(d) whether some States have demanded subsidy in this regard; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b). There has been increase in the prices of books due to increase in the price of paper, printing charges and other costs.

(c) In pursuance of the resolve expressed in the National Policy on Education 1986 to make available quality books at low prices, several measures are continuing at Government level. The Central Government initiative for school students of classes I - XII is implemented through the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The pricing of NCERT text books is done on a no-profit no-loss basis. The Council does not price its text books for classes I - VII beyond Rs. 15/- and absorbs the losses, if any. The National Book Trust operates a scheme of subsidised publication of university level text/reference books and technical books of diploma level. The University Grants Commission also provides development grants to universities and colleges, inter-alia for purchase of books by the institutions.

Till 31st March, 1990, the Central Government supplied white printing paper at subsidised rates to States/Union Territories for the production of school text books and exercise books to make them available to the students at reasonable prices.

(d) and (e). Some States have requested for the revival of the scheme for subsidised supply of white printing paper. The matter is under consideration of Government.

### **Mining in Forest Areas**

\*474. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN:  
Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria fixed for according clearance to mining in forests areas;

(b) whether the permission for obtaining clearance for mining in forest areas has become difficult; and

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to simplify the procedure for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c). The proposals for diversion of forest land for mining are required to be sent to the Central Government in the prescribed proforma alongwith relevant information. After all the essential information is received from the State/Union Territory Governments, the proposals are examined and decided on merits expeditiously. Detailed Guidelines have been issued in this regard. Now, it has been decided to modify the Guidelines to further streamline the examination of proposals under the Forest (Conservation) Act.

[Translation]

### **Plantation of Red Oil Palm**

\*478. SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA:  
SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have imposed a ban on plantation of red oil palm in